Ann Arbor Observer

ANN ARBOR DISTRICT LIBRARY

ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN FEBRUARY, 1978

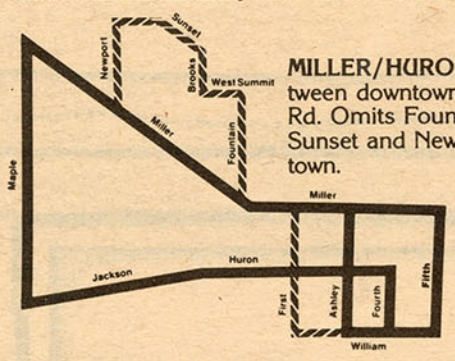
aata SNOW ROUTES

It's winter again, and when heavy snow storms make driving hazardous AATA line buses switch from their regular routes to snow routes. Snow routes follow regular routes on main roads, but avoid residential streets and hills.

To find out when AATA snow routes are in effect, listen for announcements over WAAM, WPAG and WIQB, or call either Teleweather at 971 • 8500, or the AATA at 973 • 0300.

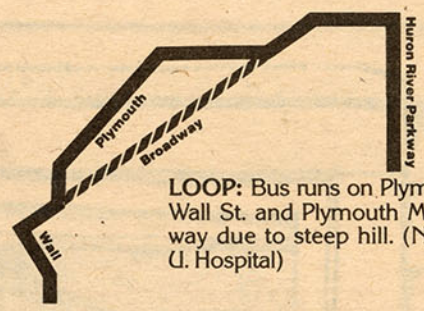
Ann Arbor

MILLER/HURON



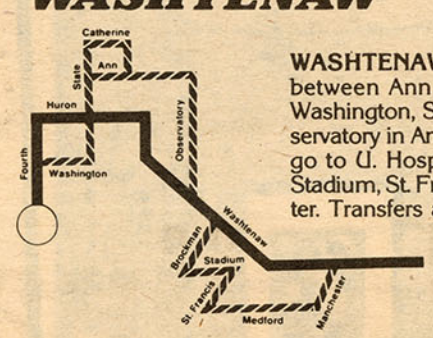
MILLER/HURON: Bus runs on Miller between downtown Ann Arbor and N. Maple Rd. Omits Fountain, W. Summit, Brooks, Sunset and Newport. Also omits 1st St. in town.

PLYMOUTH MALL/ BRIARWOOD LOOP



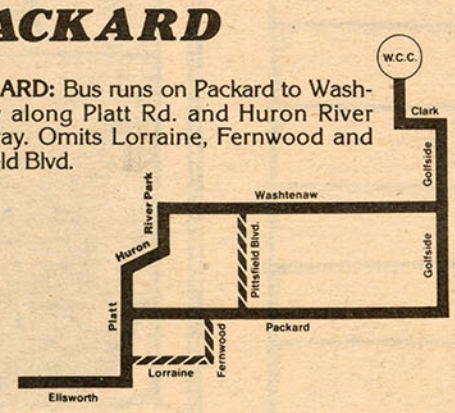
LOOP: Bus runs on Plymouth Rd. between Wall St. and Plymouth Mall. Omits Broadway due to steep hill. (Note: Bus goes to U. Hospital)

WASHTENAW



WASHTENAW: Bus runs on Washtenaw between Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti. Omits Washington, State, Ann, Catherine and Observatory in Ann Arbor. (Note: Bus **does not** go to U. Hospital) Also omits Brockman, Stadium, St. Francis, Medford and Manchester. Transfers at Washtenaw & Manchester.

PACKARD



PACKARD: Bus runs on Packard to Washtenaw along Platt Rd. and Huron River Parkway. Omits Lorraine, Fernwood and Pittsfield Blvd.

Ypsilanti

HURON RIVER ROUTE

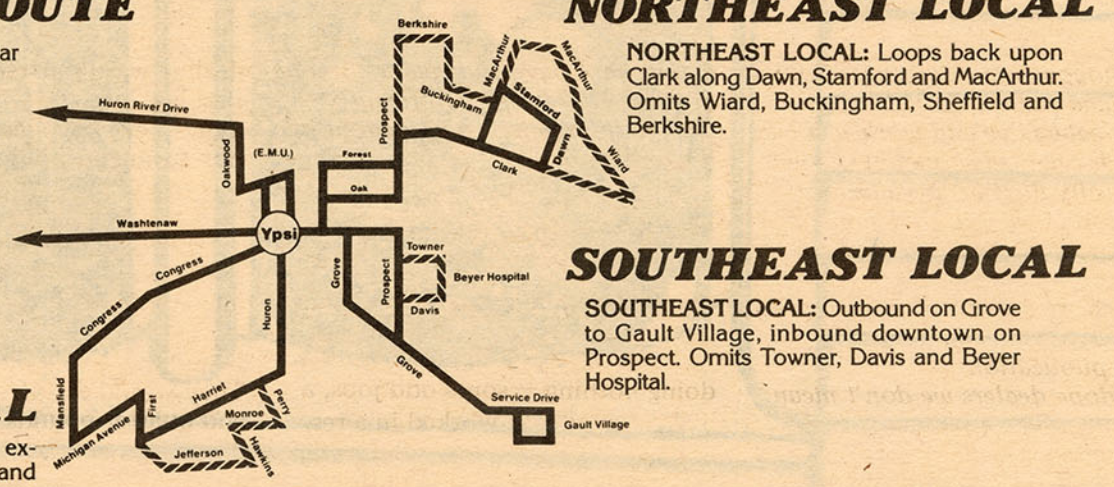
HURON RIVER ROUTE: Bus runs regular route.

WASHTENAW

WASHTENAW: Bus runs on Washtenaw between Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti. Omits Washington, State, Ann, Catherine and Observatory in Ann Arbor. (Note: Bus **does not** go to U. Hospital) Also omits Brockman, Stadium, St. Francis, Medford and Manchester. Transfers at Washtenaw & Manchester.

SOUTHWEST LOCAL

SOUTHWEST LOCAL: Runs regular except it travels on Harriett between 1st and Huron. Omits Jefferson, Hawkins, Monroe and Perry.



NORTHEAST LOCAL

NORTHEAST LOCAL: Loops back upon Clark along Dawn, Stamford and MacArthur. Omits Wiard, Buckingham, Sheffield and Berkshire.

SOUTHEAST LOCAL

SOUTHEAST LOCAL: Outbound on Grove to Gault Village, inbound downtown on Prospect. Omits Towner, Davis and Beyer Hospital.

It's better on the bus!

Ann Arbor Transportation Authority

Peter Yates

Merchant of Marijuana

A frank description of his life and craft by a local dealer.

Although Ann Arbor has a lot of marijuana dealers, and although these dealers live and work in a city which is relatively tolerant of their technically illegal transactions, it isn't all that easy to find someone in this profession who will agree to an in-depth interview. And that's not surprising, for a dealer has a lot more to lose than to gain by telling all for publication.

By dope dealers we don't mean someone who supplements his income selling a couple dozen ounces a month. We mean someone whose principal livelihood is buying and selling marijuana. Most of the professionals we sought out just laughed (if they did that) when we asked to interview them about their trade. We did eventually find one person who was willing to talk — if enough facts were changed to shield his identity. Through a somewhat complicated series of negotiations with this dealer, we believe we have preserved the overall accuracy of the account he has given. Only isolated details have been changed, and none of these alterations significantly change this dealer's portrayal of his life and work.

How did you become a dope dealer?

It was a gradual thing. I first came to Ann Arbor about six years ago. I kicked around for a year, mostly doing nothing — some odd jobs, a little carpentry. I worked in a restaurant for a short time. Before I came here, I had been to college in the East for two years. I wanted to work, but it's hard to get a decent job in Ann Arbor. There's so many young people in this town looking for work. If you don't have a good skill, you wind up working for nothing.

I was living in a big house near campus with a bunch of other guys. There were about ten of us — and all but two or three of us supported themselves dealing. Although I needed a way to earn some money, dealing wasn't attractive to me. Besides, I was new in town and didn't have any steady sources to buy from and I didn't know anybody to sell to. After a while, after I'd learned a little about dealing by watching the people in the house, I decided it would be easy to get into it in a small way.

Mostly the people in the house would buy a few pounds of grass. They would divide this into ounces and quarter-pounds and then sell it over a period of time. When they ran out, they would try to buy more. If none was available, then they wouldn't have any to sell when their customers came around. I took advantage of that situation by buying some dope myself. I didn't have any customers, but when dealers in the house would run out, then they could buy my dope and sell it. I made about $5 a lid when I first started out, and I must have sold 40 to 50 lids a month.

How do you feel morally about selling marijuana?

I feel it's OK to sell drugs. You look around — I don't think I'm as bad as people selling polluting automobiles. There's some dirt in every business. I try to stay loose about the human role.

When I first started smoking marijuana, it was a powerful thing for me. I had insights about many things — strong insights. I felt these experiences showed me things I should have known about earlier. So I would say that while high I've formed concepts which will definitely influence me all my life.

Have you sold other drugs besides marijuana?

Yes. I've dealt hash and hash oil and a few times I tried to sell psychedelics, but that never was too good. Psychedelics are just too powerful. I bought a gram of LSD once — that's 4000 hits — and it just made me too nervous to hold that much power in my hand.

What was the next phase of your dealing career after you were selling to the members of your house?

Well, I moved out of that place almost four years ago. It had gotten to be too much for me. Too high energy. There was a party almost every night. These people loved loud rock and roll music. Hot Tuna and the Rolling Stones were practically etched into my brain. Besides, keeping the communal house duties going was nearly impossible. A few women lived in the house from time to time, and they kept it kind of clean. But generally, it didn't work out at all well. I was ready for something new. So I moved into a one-room apartment about a half mile from campus.

Once I had moved, I couldn't keep my lid business in the house going the way I had, so I relied on the contacts I had met while living there. I had met a hash connection a few weeks before I moved. This guy was very close to the people who were bringing it into Ann Arbor, so I was able to buy it slightly cheaper than a lot of dealers. Also, I got it a day sooner than they did. That makes quite a difference. During that first day when the hash came, I was often able to make $400.

At that time, I had enough to buy two pounds. I think it cost me something like $1600 — $800 a pound. I broke these two pounds into eight quarters, and sold each quarter for $250. That way, I'd make $200 on each pound. I might be able to sell these quarters in four or five hours, then do it again the next day. The supply would run out in a week or so. By that time, the market was pretty well flooded. I would usually keep two pounds and wait a while for the demand to come back. It would have been nice to have sold more hash in ounces, but I never had enough contacts at that level. You have to know a lot of people to do that.

There was one guy who lived in our house who sold an amazing number of ounces. He was a poor kid from Livonia. He started off dealing on the street — buying one lid at a time and splitting it into nickel bags ($5 quantities). I don't know if he even went to high school. To tell you the truth, I don't even think he can read.

Well, this guy used to get five pounds of hash every couple of months and he sold it all in ounces. That's a lot of action, and it usually only took him a day to do it. When he was selling hash, the doorbell was ringing constantly. I don't know how he would get the word out to his friends, but he knew a lot of people. Anyway, he sold this five pounds in ounces, which amounts to eighty ounces, and he made $25 on each ounce. That's $2,000 profit for just one day's work.

He dealt in Ann Arbor for at least a couple of years. Then he decided he wanted to go to Seattle. He said he thought he'd like the climate better. I know a lot of Ann Arbor dealers who've ended up on the West Coast. The week before he left, he bought a brand new Camero — solid maroon, with all the accessories — power seats, inside trunk release, power antenna, power everything. It seemed like this guy had hardly spent a penny when he was living in the house with us, so it was kind of a shock to everyone to see him pull up with this super fancy car. I haven't seen him since the day he drove away.

Who are your main customers today?

I don't usually sell in small quantities. Most of the people I sell to are dealers themselves. They are people who don't have much capital to work with. I generally deal with about ten of these people, although the number changes from time to time. They all know many other dealers like me and they shop around for good buys.

It might work like this: one of these guys needs a pound or two for one of his customers. So he'll drop by to see what I have. His customer will usually have fronted him the money. So I'll sell him a pound for maybe $450 which I've paid maybe $400 for.

When I have a lot of pounds to sell, I'll look up these dealers and give them a sample of what I've got so they'll know the type of dope I'm selling and what it costs.

What other customers do you have?

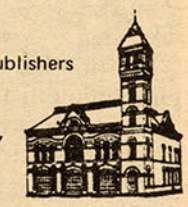
There's another type of person I sell to. He's from a nearby town and doesn't have many good connections here in Ann Arbor. Ann Arbor is a major source for a lot of nearby communities. When a large shipment of grass comes to town I might call this guy to let him know. He will go to the people he deals with in his town and they will all get their money together and send him to Ann Arbor to buy the grass from me.

I think I'm kind of an exception as far as small-time dealers go. Most people at my level like to spend a lot of time smoking it with their friends and customers. There's really an art to it. Just like when you go to a jewelry store to buy a diamond, they're gonna have the jewels displayed on black velvet.

Ann Arbor Observer

Don Hunt and **Mary Hunt,** Publishers and Editors

Susan Morales, Advertising Coordinator



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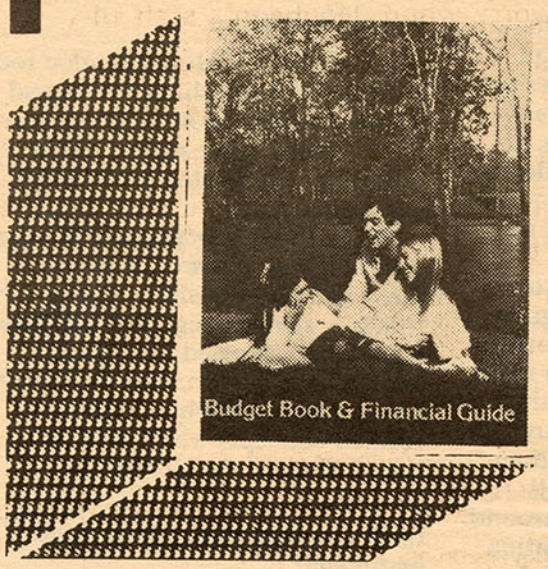
FREE BUDGET BOOK



Who says you can't save money, have a little fun and still have enough to pay your bills each month? By planning the distribution of your income ahead of time and exerting a bit of discipline, you can make more efficient use of your income with the help of the budget book. This easy to use book not only contains monthly budget charts but also helpful information such as:

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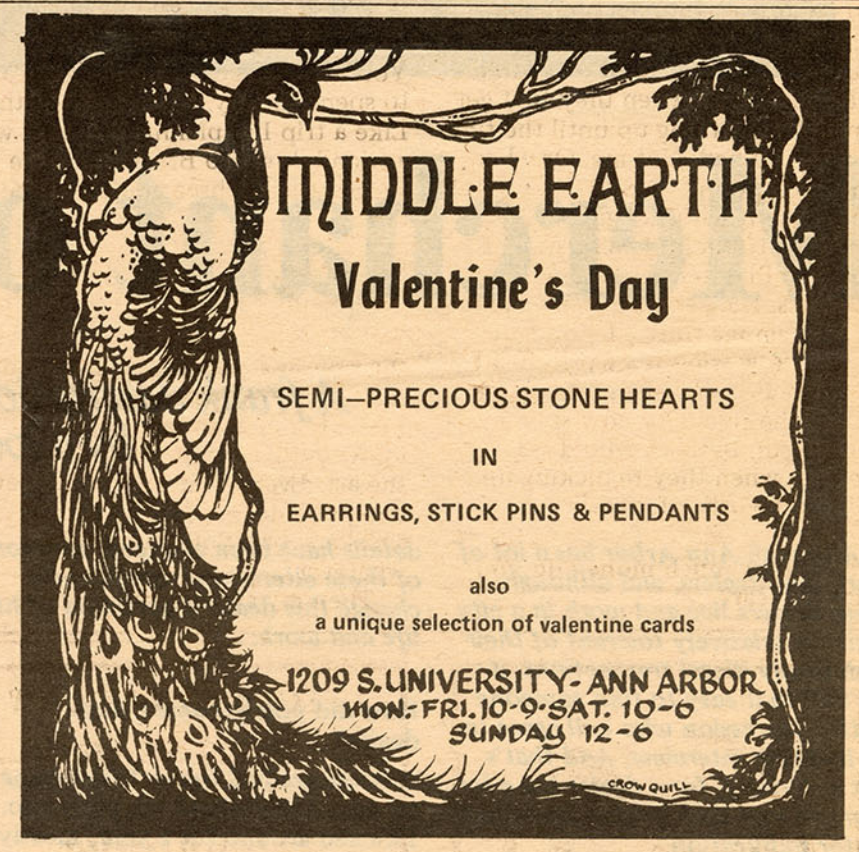

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"I would say I make a little less than $20,000 a year. And needless to say, I don't pay taxes."

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One of the guys who lived in the house was an expert at it. I make it sound as if his art was deliberate, but I really think it came more out of his personality. It was his normal way of life. He had about five Indian tapestries hung on the walls of his room. And he had a thick rug with a kind of mandela pattern. There was this huge poster of an Indian god with seven arms sitting in the lotus position. This dealer burned incense in there all the time. All the colors were soft browns and greens. Sometimes he even played sitar music.

He rolled the best joints you ever saw. He took his time, and they would come out fat and round, looking like Lucky Strikes. When he smoked, he would light it slowly, almost like a ritual, and take this huge toke way down into his lungs. He always held the joint in front of his mouth and exhaled the smoke right into the burning ash. Then he'd sniff the smoke coming off the end of the joint so he could dig the smell. What a connoisseur. Finally, he would pass it around to his customers. With him it was bad manners to talk price or anything until you'd at least smoked one joint.

Myself, I just don't like to get high all the time. A lot of people want to smoke when they first get up in the morning up until the time they go to bed. Not me. Or when they are buying pounds, they want to smoke it with the guy's who's selling it to them. I can't stand to get high like that when I'm doing business. Hell, the big dealers hardly ever smoke the stuff to test it. They know what it's worth just by looking at it. You can tell by the color, the smell, by how sticky it is with resin. Besides, who'd want to be high when they're picking up $50,000 worth of grass.

About how much money do you make a year?

Well, I would say a little less than $20,000. I have one regular trip that comes every year. This is Columbian dope that's very good quality. I must make about a third of my money on that. The rest of the things I do aren't as predictable or as profitable.

Then you make, in effect, close to $20,000 a year, working — what? — 10 hours a month?

It's hard to put in terms of hours. But it would be more like twenty hours, I'd say.

Do you ever think: I'm making close to $20,000 a year with very little work. I could put more effort into it and double that amount easily?

Sure. Everyone in this business is bound to have expansionist dreams once in a while. I'm no exception. But expanding your operations has its own problems. It's hard to explain, except to say that the more money you're dealing with, the heavier things get. At my level of operations, things aren't heavy at all, and that's the way I like it. I know my customers and I know my sources. I've never been in an uptight situation dealing dope and I never plan to be in one.

It sounds like you end up spending most of the money.

You know it's easy, incredibly easy, to spend money — I've learned that. Like a trip I'm planning to take with a friend down to Brazil. I'm sure I'll spend at least three grand on that one.

What other things do you spend money on?

Well, let's see. I like to keep up with the best hi-fi equipment that comes out — it's kind of a hobby for me. I read the hi-fi magazines, and I know quite a bit about the state of the art. Every year I get some new components — a $1,500 pair of speakers, or a $500 turntable or whatever.

Then my apartment costs me $350 a month plus utilities — that's a bundle right there. But one thing I'm not into is expensive cars. I've got a VW, and it gets me around OK. I'm really not into flash, although a lot of people who deal are. Especially it seems like coke dealers are ostentatious spenders. They'll buy a wild car, do hundreds and hundreds of dollars of coke. It's nothing for them to blow a couple hundred bucks at the Whiffletree. Believe me, it's not hard when you start ordering good bottles of champagne.

Another money drain for me is eating out. I do it almost every night. I like to take women out to eat. Most of them know I can afford it, so they let me pay. It's nice to have company when you eat.

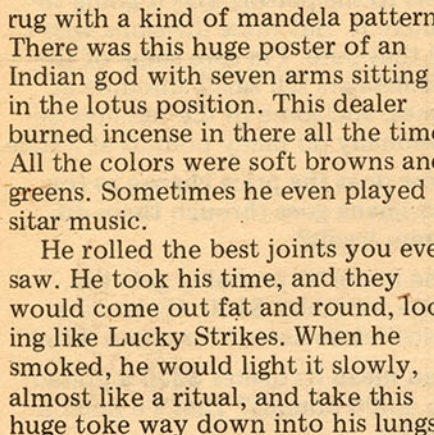
I've bought some pottery and some paintings. I must spend a couple of thousand a year on that kind of stuff. And I've gotten into good wines. Five or six dollars a bottle is about as cheap as I'll go. I buy probably around a couple hundred bottles a year. Maybe more: one good party can use up a couple of cases.

What do you do with the considerable amount of leisure time on your hands?

(Laughs) I've asked myself the same question. The time just passes, you know. I like to keep fit, so I work out two or three afternoons a week. Right now I'm taking a class in karate. I listen to music — mostly jazz — quite a bit. I spend time at a few spots visiting with friends. Occasionally I like to take pictures with my camera. I have a friend who's a cabinet maker, and I helped him set up the shop — you know I bought a few tools and stuff. He's teaching me woodworking. It's a pretty laid-back life, I guess you'd say. And that seems OK most of the time. But some of the time I seem to get bored. Usually what I do then is to get on a jet and fly to visit friends in other cities, or fly to a different part of the world.

What about the lifestyle of some of the other dealers you know?

Some of the people who are into the big money are pretty wild. There's this one group of dealers in California who bought a commercial-sized jet, a DC-9 I think. They fixed it up like you would a deluxe van — thick carpet, beds, the best stereo, a fantastic bar. I really don't know all the details. Anyway, big rock groups rent it out when they go on tour. You



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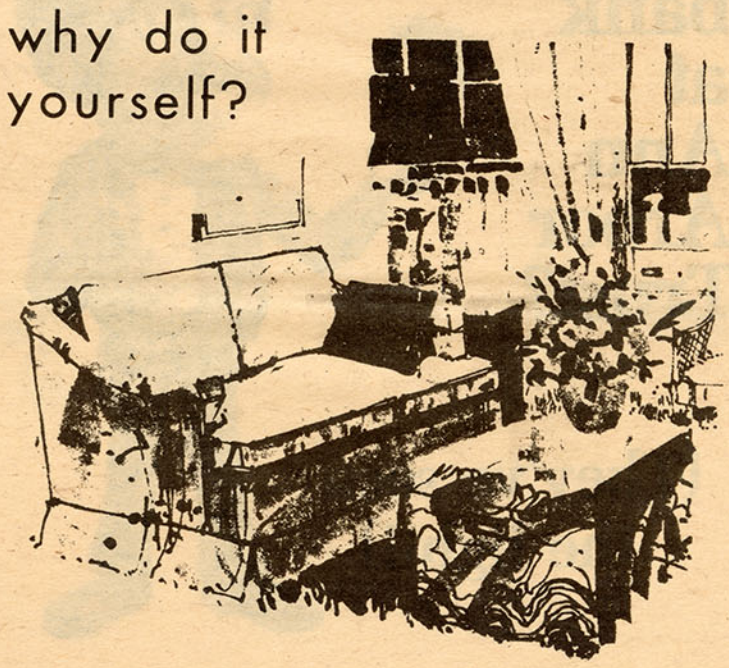
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know, like the Rolling Stones — whoever can afford it. Then these guys who own it can hang out with the stars. Rich dealer groupies, that's what they are. These guys would really get off on snorting some coke with Mick Jagger. Think about that some night when you see a jet at 30,000 feet. It might be these guys partying up there.

I don't know any big dealers very well. I've just had them pointed out to me. At parties, restaurants, or around town. Besides, you hear so many stories, it's hard to know what to believe.

Most of the people I know are smaller. Some of my connections probably make around $100,000 a year. Some of these people are real flashy, but a lot of them lead inconspicuous lives. Some are married and have a family. They've bought houses. Usually they'll have a nice truck or car. A lot of the smaller time people are into entertainment. They like to party and go to rock and roll concerts. They'll go out to the coast to hear a group if nothing is happening around here. With a lot of dope people it's easy come, easy go. They haven't worked for the money very hard, and they spend it real fast. Mostly on things that won't last. They have amazing record collections and some pretty wild clothes, but if they stopped dealing today, they'd be broke in a year.

Can you tell us some more about your connections, the people you buy your dope from?

Here we're touching on a pretty sensitive area for me. I'm sure none of these guys would like to read about themselves in the *Observer*, but I'll give you some general details.

I know about six or seven guys I can buy from. Some of these guys have regular trips, but mostly it kind of floats around. They'll come into something and then they'll give me a call. Or if I need a few pounds, one of these guys will usually be holding something. Of course then the price will be higher.

One of the guys I like to buy from the best lives outside Ann Arbor in the country. I met him when I lived in the house. He usually does two or three big trips a year, nowhere near as big as the Columbian, though. It's not always the same trip, but the price is good and this guy is trustworthy. Some of these people will short you on weight, or sell wet dope that will lose a lot when it dries out, but not him. I guess he knows people who bring dope into the area. I'm not sure, because I never ask him about it.

"With a lot of dope people, it's easy come, easy go. They haven't worked for the money very hard, and they spend it real fast."

Can you describe all the parts of a dope trip? Say from the time the marijuana enters the country to the time it reaches the consumer?

O.K., I'll try. Let me talk about this Columbian trip, 'cause I know the most about that. This thing is organized like a pyramid. On top you have the importer. He's the one who has set the whole thing up. He buys the dope in South America and has it smuggled into Florida by boat. Then it's brought to Ann Arbor by semi. I would guess there's about 4,000 pounds. Then it's taken to a farm house or some place outside of town.

The importer contacts his distributors—I would say there are four or five of them. The distributors only sell large amounts, not ten or twenty pounds, but fifties and hundreds. They only want to deal with people who can help them move a large amount of dope. That's how they make their money. See, the importer doesn't want to leave the dope sitting around. It's too dangerous, so he wants to get his money out right away. These distributors can really move the dope. They know lots of people who can afford large amounts. These people are what you might call the wholesalers.

Then these wholesalers sell to smaller wholesalers, people like me. I can generally handle about 100 pounds of this dope. Maybe what would happen is that I would get two loads of 50 pounds each. My connection—a wholesaler— will bring 50 pounds and I'll give him half the money. Then when I sell it, I'll give him the rest of the money. Usually I don't order the dope until I'm pretty sure I have it sold.

The small wholesalers sell to what you might call the retailer, and he sells to the person who it going to smoke it. But these divisions aren't all that pure. I'm sure some of the wholesalers sell small amounts at times, and some of the retailers occasionally do many pounds at a time.

How does the price change as the marijuana goes through these different levels?

The importer probably gets the dope for under $100. He lets the distributors have it for about $350.

You mean he makes $250 a pound on 4,000 pounds? That's a million dollars.

Don't forget, he has expenses. Smuggling and transportation cost quite a bit. And he has risk. Getting caught with that much dope is no joke. Although, I'll bet he personally is never in possession of it. He's organized this thing, and he's on top of it. The importers are out to make some money, and they don't share any more of it than they have to.

The distributors make about $30 or $40 a pound. They don't have as much risk, and it doesn't take them as long as it does the importer to do their job.

Really what they are is a cartel—like those Arab countries that set the price of oil. They meet at the beginning of the trip and set a price that they will sell the dope for. Otherwise, they would be undercutting each other.

It's very cutthroat at this level. There's only so much dope and they all want to sell as much as they can. If one of the distributors cuts his price in order to sell more, the other distributors will get really pissed off. They would probably go to the importer and ask him to cut this guy off. And he would do it too, because he wants his network to keep going smoothly.

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Now, the wholesalers make about $20 a pound. I make about the same thing, but it depends on whom I'm selling to. What happens is this—I'll get a sample of the dope from my wholesaler. Then I'll call all the people I know who might want some. I give them some of this sample that they can use to show their friends. Then, when they've checked it out, they come back to me with their orders. So then I have a feeling about how much I can sell, and I tell my connection how much to bring me. I might sell it mostly 5 or 10 pounds at a time, then I make $20 a pound. If it's one or two pounds, I make $35 each.

But if someone I know well, someone who really has it together, wants to do a large amount, say 30 or 40 pounds, I'll drop my profit to $10. But this doesn't happen too often. That's O.K. with me. It's true I make $300 or $400 real fast, but it takes a lot out of me. We're talking about a $15,000 deal, when I sell 30 or 40 pounds, and there's definitely more pressure in something like that. Besides if I go to all the trouble to set it up and it doesn't come through, what have I got? Then too, if I've told my connection that I want to do a large amount, and then I back out, it only makes me look bad.

Some of my customers always say they have a guy who wants to do 100 or 500 pounds, or whatever. But these things rarely come through. Anyone with that kind of money wouldn't come to someone like me. They'd be able to make a better connection.

It takes a couple weeks or so to sell all the pounds. I might make $2,000 in that time. When my wholesaler runs out, I make sure I am holding as many pounds as I can afford. Once the main trip is over, the price goes up. I take these remaining pounds and divide them into quarters. I won't sell any more pounds. The I just wait until people want to buy it. They always run out of dope sooner or later. A lot of dealers know I have these quarters, and eventually they come for them, even though they are expensive. I make about $150 on each of these pounds. And, depending on how much money I have at the time, I usually sell about 20 or 30 of them.

How much does the guy you sell to– the "retailer"– add to the price?

Well, if these guys are getting pounds for someone else, they may add $10 or $20. Now if they're breaking the pounds into lids, which is about the same thing as an ounce, they make much more. Say they bought a pound from me for $450, and they made ounces. Now first you have to clean the dope. You know– take the big sticks out. You might lose an ounce here. So you have 15 ounces. These go for $40 each. That's $600 he can get. But usually these people smoke a lot of it. Say maybe he smokes an ounce with his customers, sort of like a sample, so they can try it out. So this retailer ends up making about $8 an ounce, which is a hard way to make money.

Compare that to the distributor who sells 100 pounds at a time and makes $4,000. It's just like all business—the big guys make the money. They take the most responsibility and risk. But they really rake it in.

Where did you grow up?

I'd rather not say exactly, but it's on the east coast.

What do your parents do for a living?

My mom's a housewife. My dad's an electrical contractor.

Do they know what you do for a living?

Not really. I told them I'm the manager of a local group. Once they found out I wasn't going to finish college, they sort of lost interest in my career plans. Still, they know I make a pretty good income, so they don't worry about me. •

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Ann Arbor Items

Why Snow Removal Here Is Slow

Why aren't Ann Arbor's street cleared as promptly as other cities such as Ypsilanti and Dearborn? That has become a frequent complaint of citizens to the city's Streets, Traffic, and Parking Department, responsible for snow plowing. Department head John Robbins, no doubt irked by charges that this service is mismanaged, decided to compare Ann Arbor's snow-removal facilities with those of Ypsilanti and Dearborn.

What he found was that when you take into consideration the number of miles of streets each city has to plow, Dearborn and Ypsilanti have at least twice the amount of equipment (plows, graders, front end loaders) to do the job that Ann Arbor has. It presently takes about 32 hours for all of Ann Arbor's 272 miles of streets to be cleared after a snowfall of six inches or less. Robbins points out that the way to cut that time in half (to 16 hours) is to double the department's number of plows and graders.

Robbins also found that the other two cities use substantially more salt on their roads than does Ann Arbor. For example Ypsilanti, which has less than one fourth the street miles of Ann Arbor (58 vs. 272), uses well over half as much salt (3500 plus to Ann Arbor's 6000 lbs.). Both Dearborn and Ypsilanti salt neighborhood streets, while Ann Arbor does not. Ann Arbor's streets department has been directed by council to use the minimum amount of salt possible for ecological reasons.

For Some the Blizzard Was A Welcome Relief

The blizzard on January 26 and 27 was one of those events that shakes people out of their everyday routines and habits. Passersby downtown cheerfully said hello to each other — an infrequent occurence in urban settings these days. Most businesses were closed, of course, but short-order places like The Central Cafe and Bill's Coffee Cup were opened to serve their downtown clienteles. Those bars that had the help to stay open did a good business, too. Cross-country skis were lined up outside the Central, and inside the place was nearly full. Two women had walked four miles to get there, accomplishing errands along the way.

The line at the Capitol Market was much longer than usual, with people buying a carton of eggs or a bottle of Scotch before holing up to wait out the storm. Borders Book Shop was full of browsers.

In late January's winter doldrums, even a blizzard seems welcome, judging from the smiling faces we saw. The situation in the more remote suburban areas, however, was less carefree. Automobiles were useless, and those who hadn't shopped recently faced a curboard full of noodles, beans, and little else.

One woman in Ann Arbor Township, who depends on her own pump for water, was cautioned by two neighbors who grew up on farms farms to draw water before the pow power fails, or else she'd be without water for cooking and washing. But

But downtown the blizzard created a party atmosphere. Everyone seemed sociable. Walking down the familiar streets decorated with exotic wind-blown snow drifts and lacy tree branches was akin to walking into your high school gym on prom night, when crepe paper had transformed it into an icicle palace or flowering garden, despite the presence of basketball courts and bleachers.

A Double-Decker Bus On Liberty?

Despite the AATA board's decision to continue a feasibility study for a downtown antique trolley line, few people give the project even a fighting chance to be implemented. The AATA board has made it clear that it will not allocate funds to support it, and no one has come up with other likely sources for the million plus dollars needed to install the line. Although there is widespread support for a trolley line, no solution to the financial hurdle is on the horizon.

With the prospects for a downtown trolley bleak, some people are looking around for other attractive vehicles which could provide a pleasant ride along Liberty between the State Street and Main Street shopping areas. One suggestion is an old-fashioned British Leland double-decker bus. According to Ann Arbor Tomorrow's Carol Sullivan, who has made a brief research of the idea, such busses cost about $15,000. Like the trolley, operating expenses could be subsidized by selling advertising space on the inside and outside of the bus to area businesses. But it's still not clear how available such busses are and what kind of condition they are in.

Downtown Construction Boom

The recent "Downtown Newsletter" published by Ann Arbor Tomorrow contains some impressive figures on the amount of construction and improvements which took place downtown in 1977. While the years 1975 and 1976 averaged $580,000 worth of work, this figure has jumped to $15 million in 1977.

Biggest projects of '77: the new Federal Building and the federally funded Central Fire Station (together costing $6 million). Private investment paid for the Michigan Square complex on Liberty ($1 million).

Over $4.5 million of the $15 million went into renovation, remodeling, or expansion. Renovation of the building at Liberty and Main to create the Downtown Racquet Club and office space cost $1 million alone. Other major projects were the New Earle jazz club and the Darling Block across from the Federal Building.

The Parking Structure Impasse

Will a badly needed new carport for downtown ever be approved by city council? The answer to that now perennial question seems as unclear as ever. Some, for example councilman Lou Belcher, voice hope that approval will come by this spring. But his expectation of a new carport is many months old and the roots of the impass over the carport issue are unchanged.

One basic reason why a new carport isn't being built is that carport parking rates are, from a free-market standpoint, artificially low. Deficits from the city's five existing carports currently eat up the entire surplus from parking meters and lots. The natural solution would be to increase parking rates, but there is widespread fear that demand for downtown parking is soft, even though it considerably exceeds supply today. The marked increase in rates needed to pay for the structure might discourage so many potential parkers that total revenues resulting from higher rates would be no higher than total revenues from the existing rates.

A recent survey suggests that two-thirds of all Ann Arborites want more parking built downtown. But council members are keenly aware that the public wants a lot more things than it is willing to pay for.

An Error in the Yellow Pages

Anyone who has purchased advertising space in the Yellow Pages knows how costly these ads are. For example, a one column, two-and-one-half inch ad costs about $700. That's the size of an ad Al and Jill Blixt put in the 1976-77 Yellow Pages for their photography and design company, Photo-Graphics, located in Nickels Arcade. Listed under "Photography" in the Yellow Pages, the ad was intended to advertise the firm's wedding photography services.

But the Yellow Pages people made a mistake. Over the Photo-Graphics logo was printed boldly, "PASSPORT PHOTOS," instead of the fine script "Wedding Photography" requested. The error created a problem for the Blixts, to say the least. Not only did it cause them to lose wedding photography business, they also received up to eighteen calls a day from people wanting passport photos.

The Blixts figure the error cost them up to $75,000, and it seemed to them that Bell Telephone, which publishes the Yellow Pages, is liable for the sum. Bell sees the matter differently. Its lawyers point to a clause in the contract every advertiser must sign. That clause states that Bell is liable only for the cost of the ad if they make an error.

Finding Bell intractable, the Blixts took the dispute to Circuit Court, where Judge Ross Campbell sided with them against Bell. Judge Campball decided Bell was liable for damages, citing a 1969 Court of Appeals ruling which found this type of contract illegal. It's now up to a jury to decide how much money Bell must pay Photo-Graphics. •

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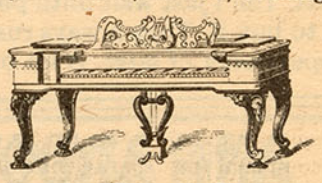

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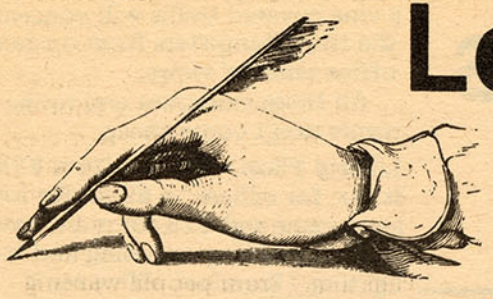


Letters

A Slap On The Side

I am a frequent pedestrian downtown due to a part-time delivery job I have, and I am amazed at the increasing rudeness of drivers who seem to think that if they have stopped at a red light and no cars are coming from the left, they can turn right, whether or not a person is trying to walk across the street (on a green light). When cars cut in front of me in such circumstances, causing me to wait for them to pass, I now have a standard response: I give their car a solid slap on the side and let out a pitiful moan, making them think they have hit me. Their momentary shock is just punishment in what seems more and more to be a motorist's world.

TERRY HARGROVE

Slushy Sidewlks

How about a full-blown expose of the preposterous number of people around the downtown/campus area who don't shovel their walks. My own favorite offender is the Firestone store at Huron and Division. They plow their large outside parking area, but don't usually touch the two sidewalks that join at the corner of their property. Sometimes, they plow the snow from their lot onto the sidewalk!

What a drag it is to walk through several inches of slush. If a property owner won't obey the law and clear his or her sidewalks, the city ought to get it done and bill them.

JACK DONNELLY

[At present, the city handles this problem on a complaint basis. When the city receives a complaint (made by telephoning 994-2818) a Streets, Traffic and Parking worker checks out the sidewalk in question. If it hasn't been cleared (property owners are given 24 hours after a snowfall to do so), the occupants are given a red ticket which tells them to clear it or the city will have it cleared and send the bill to the owners.]

Apology Due

I think your article on the arbitrage investments made by the city gave a vivid picture of the whole affair. One interesting aspect of the matter you didn't touch on was just how a Merrill-Lynch employee could be operating so improperly without his firm detecting the mischief. The city may have goofed in making these investments, but it seems to me they were looking to Merrill-Lynch as experts to advise them in making investments. In this capacity, Merrill-Lynch failed the citizens of Ann Arbor spectacularly. I think it is worth noting that Merrill-Lynch has yet to apologize to the city for its poor handling of that account, nor even admitted that it had done anything wrong. If a government agency behaved in this way, we would consider it a heavy-handed cover-up.

DAVID COOPER

Pointless Plaques?

I was surprised to learn from your article, "Will These Buildings Be Saved?" that the white plaques you see on many older Ann Arbor buildings do not mean these buildings will be saved. What is the point of those plaques, if their meaning isn't "Don't tear me down!"?

TIM NORTHRUP

[The historic building plaques affixed to 54 central Ann Arbor buildings function primarily as consciousness raisers. They are a reminder that there is something special about that particular building. Some historic preservationists see that as a helpful first step in getting the public to recognize its important old buildings. Without the public's support, they point out, historic preservation can't succeed.]

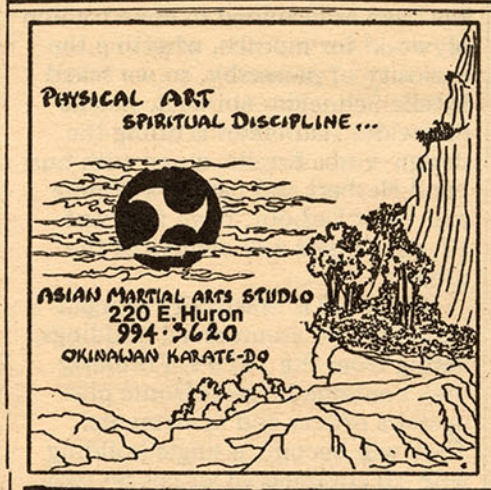
Letters to the Observer are welcome. Send them to: Ann Arbor Observer, 502 East Huron, Ann Arbor 48104.

Test Of the Town

Where is the subject of this photo? If your answer is one of the first two correct answers mailed to us, you will win a record of your choice at the Liberty Music Shop, 417 E. Liberty. Send answers to the Ann Arbor Observer, 502 East Huron, Ann Arbor 48104.

We tried to make last month's mystery photo more difficult by cropping away all the light-color brick surrounding the ornamental flourishes on the facade of the Mayer-Schairer Office Supply building at 112 S. Main. But that didn't fool Timothy Chester and Marlene Dyer, the winners of January's prizes.

Bob Breck



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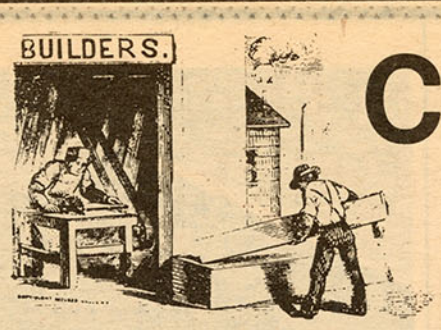


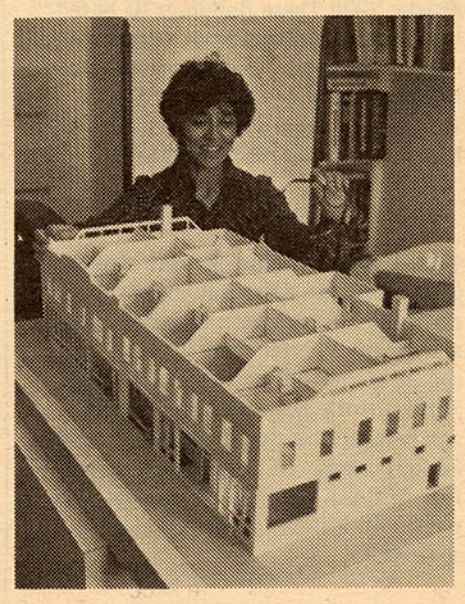
Changes

From Darling Block to Liberty Plaza: A Massive Renovation

April 1 is the anticipated opening date for the completely renovated Liberty Plaza (the two adjoining buildings on Liberty where Fischer Pharmacy and Collectors House of Art used to be). The street facade has been enshrouded in construction plywood for months, whetting the curiosity of passersby, so we asked Estelle Schneider about it. Estelle Schneider Associates is doing the design work. Estelle, along with husband Herbert and partners Bonnie and Peter DeLoof, form Concept IV, developers and owners of the project.

Schneider is drastically reorganizing the two commercial buildings, dating from the 1910's. Formerly they contained 6 storefronts plus upstairs offices and apartments. They will become a single building with 15 commercial spaces on two levels plus 12 upstairs offices.

The remodeling will incorporate several concepts not frequently seen in Ann Arbor. An interior hallway will connect the store spaces with one another on the inside. Ground floor spaces will also have street entrances. Window wells (similar to those in Concept IV's buildings at 111 and 113 S. Fourth Avenue) will bring light to the "lower level" (a current euphemism for what used to be known as the basement).



Estelle Schneider with a model of Liberty Plaza, cut away to show the two-level upstairs offices with balconies. Fischer Pharmacy used to be in the corner foreground space.

Some shops will open only onto the rear, where a covered arcade, awnings, brick walkway, special lighting, and landscaping will create what Schneider calls "an all around environment." Not just the streetfront but all the space around the building will be attractive to pedestrians. A brick wall will screen the trash dumpsters from passersby, and a vine-covered trellis will conceal the trash dumpsters from upstairs office tenants' views.

All these amenities and refinements don't come cheap.

Liberty Plaza rents run from $8/sq. ft./yr. for offices to $9.50 for lower level space and $13 for main level space, including carpeting and track lighting. (Standard office rents downtown are from $5 to $12. Ground floor commercial space downtown runs from $5 to $8 for older buildings.)

Several tenants have already signed leases in Liberty Square. Richard and Sandra Marks of Tecumseh will have a stained glass and supplies store in a two-level space. Their studio-workshop will remain in Tecumseh, in the old cobblestore church on the Chicago Road. Ayla Inc. will be a high-quality women's clothing shop owned by David Conlan and his wife Ayla, "a most elegant lady," we're told by an acquaintance who knows something about elegance herself. "When you look at her, you want to say 'What do you recommend I buy?' "

A restaurant called "Afternoon Delight" will serve light meals — breakfast, lunch and dinner — largely based on yogurt, fruit and vegetables. Office leases have been signed by Goldstein, Welber and Florey, a law firm, and by Vorelco, a Volkswagen subsidiary dealing with pollution control.

Concept IV has also acquired the fanciful turreted building at Washington and Fourth Ave. occupied by Harry's Army Surplus. It backs up to Concept IV's two luxury apartment/commercial buildings on South Fourth Ave. Schneider admits that doing away with the wavey red, blue, and yellow stripes painted on the turret (a legacy of its occupation at one time by a pinball parlor called The Dragon Inn) was a motive in acquiring the property. Harry's has a long-term lease. Concept IV's plans for the building are indefinite. •

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first devoted to exploration of a planet's atmosphere as opposed to its surface and interior.

February 26, 1979

The last total eclipse of the sun in the contiguous United States in this century. It's in the Pacific Northwest.

March 5, 1979

The Voyager 1 fly-by of Jupiter and its moons. Launched last summer, Voyager is a lesser version of the "Grand Tour" mission planned to take advantage of the rare opportunity offered next year when all the outer planets, from Jupiter to Pluto, are at the right relative positions to enable a spacecraft to go from one to the other and be speeded up so much by the gravity of each planet that it could go to even distant planets in a far shorter time than present-day rockets could achieve directly. That happens only once every 175 years. The Jupiter fly-by alone offers a chance to study six different worlds — Jupiter and five of its moons — "*so different* from any worlds we've studied so far," Loudon says, "as to make Mars and Earth and Venus look *identical*. Most are not even made of *rock*, for instance. Ganymede, the third of Jupiter's four major moons, appears to be made almost *entirely* of liquid water. It's a huge drop of *water* 3000 miles across with a thin ice crust. And Callisto, the fourth major moon, is made almost entirely of *ice*. It's a planet Mercury-sized *snowball*. Jupiter itself has no solid surface — it's made entirely of gases and liquids. It has the *Great Red Spot* in its atmosphere, 2½ times the the diameter of the earth, which is a storm with winds of over 500 m.p.h., going on for *three centuries* with no sign of letting up."

Target date March or later

The Space Shuttle's first three flights into orbit. The Space Shuttle was recently tested for steep re-entry into earth's atmosphere by being carried piggyback five miles up by a 747 jet. It's the foundation of the American space program through out the 1980's. A reusable vehicle, it specializes in one thing: going from earth's surface into low orbit around the earth. From it vehicles far more distant missions can be launched. The shuttle will reduce the cost of space flight by 90%, according to Loudon.

July 9, 1979

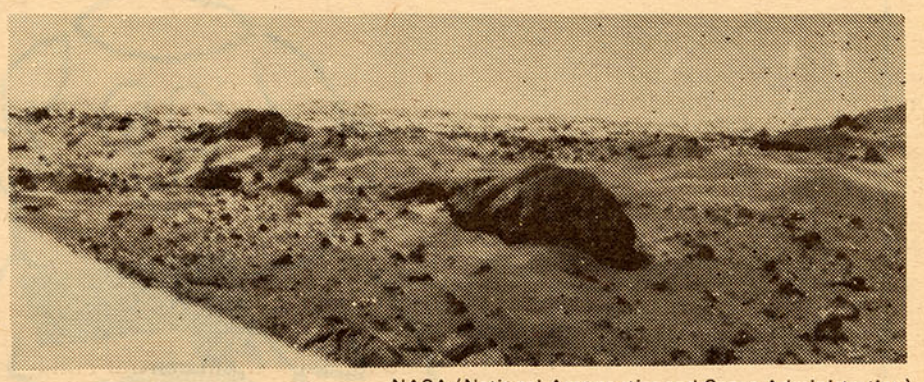
Voyager 2 Jupiter encounter, which observes different moons and Jupiter itself from different angles. If all goes well, Voyager 2 will be sent on to Uranus and its moons.

September 5, 1979

The arrival at Saturn of Pioneer II, the first spacecraft to observe Saturn at close range. Seven of Saturn's moons will be studied, and the possible existence of suspected moons will be verified.

Even if National Public Radio can afford to sponsor the extensive series of reports on this space spectacular that Loudon proposes, he still needs to save up money for the venture. So he's living even more frugally than usual and lining up as many lectures as he can. If his plans work out, he'll be pulling up stakes next December and heading for the first stop of his adventure, NASA Ames Research Center south of San Francisco, the site of the Pioneer Venus mission control center. •

The Astronomical Film Festival For February: Viking Unveils Mars Mysteries



NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration)

A Martian landscape photographed by Viking 1. Large dark boulders up to ten feet wide dominate the scene, with mottled rocks in the foreground and dunes beginning to the right.

The U-M Astronomical Film Festival, sponsored by the U-M Exhibit Museum Planetarium and the Department of Aerospace Engineering, will have three programs on successive Fridays in February, and none in March or April. All of these free programs are on the Viking mission to Mars, which Loudon covered live for National Public Radio during much of 1976. Viking is still going on, and Loudon promises to deliver "stuff I *guarantee* nobody's going to get anywhere else," with no duplication from his three Viking lectures last year.

February 10. VIKING REPORT 4 includes the revised version of the film "Mars Minus Myth," describing the mission's goals.

According to Loudon, "most of our knowledge of the second-nearest planet to Earth, and the one that is most like us, has been acquired only in this decade. . . . The 'classical' (which in Mars studies means pre-1971!) picture of Mars, with its Earthlike atmosphere, canals, huge dark-green regions of vegetation, and seasonally melting polar caps, turns out to be so different from the real Mars that it's essentially an invention of the human mind. (The canals don't exist, the dark areas aren't green, let alone vegetation, the air is thinner than at the bottom of Earth's stratosphere and made mostly of unbreathable carbon dioxide, and the polar caps don't melt — they're made of dry ice at 190 degrees below zero Fahrenheit.)"

"Viking Report 4" is primarily an update on the geology of Mars and its two tiny but fascinating moons, Phobos and Deimos, discovered 100 years ago last August by U-M graduate Asaph Hall.)

February 17. VIKING REPORT 5 includes the "Nova!" television program on "The Search for Life," which describes the Viking Biology Investigation, man's first attempt to find life on a world other than Earth. Loudon's lecture is mainly devoted to Mars' atmosphere, including its bizarre weather. "Mars is the only planet we know," he says, "where, every winter, one-third of the planet's air supply freezes solid and falls to the ground, forming a polar cap of dry ice visible even from Earth. Every Martian year, winds of 300 miles an hour or more churn up veils of Martian dust which can blanket the entire planet. The two Viking Landers have now survived both of these phenomena, and a major theme of the lecture will be what they observed.

February 24. VIKING REPORT 6 will cover the bewildering results of Viking's Biology Investigation, according to Loudon. "The results are . . . so unexpected by the standards of either those who thought there probably was life on Mars or those who doubted it, that we simply do not know whether we have or have not found it. What we do know for sure is that we've stumbled on something—whether it's life or non-living chemistry which is somehow able to mimic life in many ways—unlike anything we've ever known on Earth."

Also on the program will be two short films on the Space Shuttle tests carried out last summer to rehearse the critical and difficult descent from space of the Shuttle's most complex part, the Orbiter.

The programs are held in the comfortable Modern Languages Building Auditorium 3 (behind the Bell Tower on Washington between Ingalls and Thayer). Programs begin at 8 PM and last until 11 or 12, so we'd recommend a cup of coffee or tea beforehand.

A complete information sheet on astronomy events open to the public throughout southeastern Michigan during this current school semester may be obtained by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to CURRENT ASTRONOMY SCHEDULE, U-M Exhibit Museum Planetarium, 1109 Geddes Avenue, 48109. For the *next* schedule, send the stamped, self-addressed envelope to ASTRONOMY SCHEDULE 21 at the same address. •

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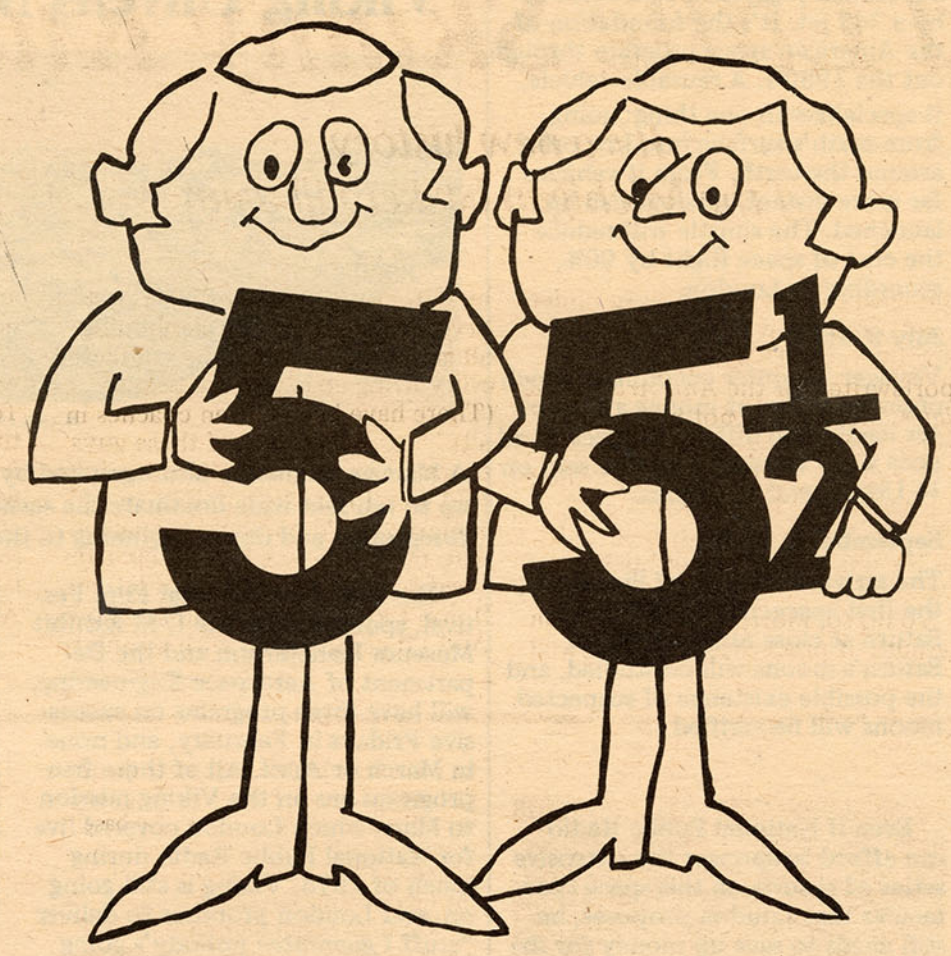

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Pigeons, Bloody Noses and Little Skinny Kids

It's a new history of the Michigan basketball team

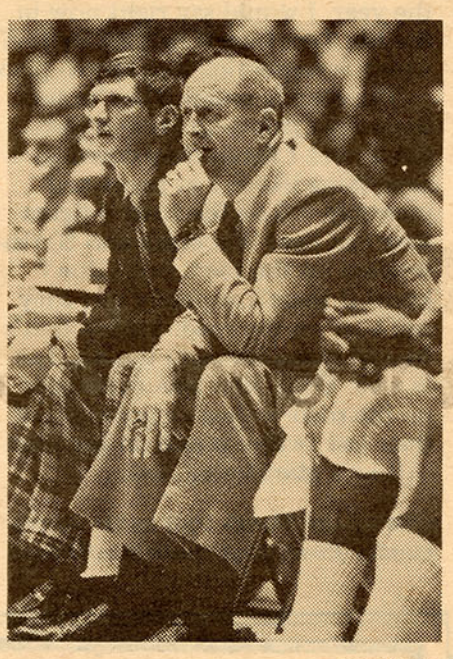
Despite the problems Michigan's basketball team is having this year, interest in the team is high, thanks to the four previous seasons during which time the Wolverines had a cumulative won-loss record of 92-24.

It's a propitious time for a Wolverine team history, and one has just been published by the local firm of Thomson-Shore. The book is called *Pigeons, Bloody Noses and Little Skinny Kids* (for reasons you have to read the book to understand), and it's written by Jeff Mortimer, the U-M basketball sportswriter for the *Ann Arbor News* *News*, Mortimer is not just a good writer, ne is a perceptive observer of of the game. He has been following the Wolverines for the *News* since 1972, and is well-suited to chronicle the ups and downs of Michigan basketball.

To do so, Mortimer read through decades of press clippings, followed by extensive interviews with past players and coaches. Telephoning all across the country, he contacted every living coach of the team. (There have been eleven coaches in all). "Tracking some of these guys down was a job in itself," Mortimer told us. "I felt like a detective sometimes. I'd contact one person who might know where the person I was seeking was, and he'd tell me, 'I don't know, but so-and-so knows.' And I'd get in touch with so-and-so and he'd say, 'Well, the last I knew he was at such and such a place.' And I'd call there and somebody would say, 'Oh, no, he moved to Texas three years ago.' " But eventually Mortimer tracked them down. Ironically one of the easiest to find was Michigan's first basketball coach (for the 1918 and 1919 seasons) Elmer Mitchell, now in his late 80's, who still lives in Ann Arbor.

John Orr's Late-Blooming Career

At the center of the Wolverine's basketball success in recent years is coach John Orr. Here, in an excerpt from Pigeons, Bloody Noses and Little Skinny Kids, is Mortimer's portrayal of Orr:



Peter Yates

Unlike all of his predecessors except Ozzie Cowles, Orr was not a Michigan man. In fact, he had been at the school for only one year, as Strack's top assistant, before becoming Don Canham's surprise choice for the top job. Orr represented a symbolic break with the past, too: he had never coached a game at Yost Field House.

"That was a strange thing, hiring a guy like me," says Orr. "Everybody wanted to know who I was."

Orr was, and is, the only child of a coal miner. He was, and is, both affable and intense, folksy and withdrawn, wily and ingenuous. He is comparable to Casey Stengel, concealing his vast knowledge of the game behind a steady stream of droll blather for the media's benefit, appearing to reveal much but never revealing more than he intends. And, like Stengel, he was something of a gypsy before settling down, at a relatively advanced age, in the job where he achieved his greatest fame.

As that fame grew, he reinforced the elements that he perceived to be central to it: cultivating his hillbilly accent, embellishing his endless stories, honing his self-deprecating humor. His efforts may have backfired in Ann Arbor, where such traits are not highly valued and where he is regarded, wrongly, as an intellectual lightweight. Elsewhere, he is highly regarded indeed, and reigns as one of the nation's most coveted clinic instructors and after-dinner speakers.

Three months after his birth in Pittsburgh, Kansas, on June 10, 1927, his parents, Bert and Anna Jane, moved to Taylorville, Illinois, where he grew up. "My dad worked 26 years in the mines," he says. "My grandfathers, all my relatives, worked there. It was all strip mining in Kansas, so we moved to Taylorville, where there were four mines.

"Almost all the people I ran around with had only one or two kids in the family. That was the Depression and things were tough. In the summers, when I was going to college, I worked in the mines, too. That was the goal of most of the guys I went to school with — to get a good job in the mines. That's all they understood.

"I was a C+ student. I was never that serious about it, although I took college prep courses: physics, chemistry, Latin, math. So I could go to college. I didn't have any plans, but I guess my advisers did."

His advisers may have realized that the all-around athlete — all-state in football, picked for the Esquire all-star baseball game in Chicago, the top basketball scorer in the state — would need some academic credentials to nail down a scholarship.

"Ray Elliott [the football coach] talked to me about Illinois," he says. "The only thing he ever did for me — to show you how things have changed — was he took me down to Brooks Drive-In and bought me a hamburger basket. I paid my own way to the campus during the conference track meet, had a good time, stayed in a fraternity house, and decided to go there.

"They gave me $80 a semester. No room, no board, no nothin.' They just paid for my tuition. I worked for my meals, washed dishes, waited on tables."

Orr started at left end in every Illinois football game in the fall of 1944, when he was only 17. Two days after the football season ended, he was starting for the basketball team. And he was the baseball team's regular right fielder when he joined the Navy, mostly to stay out of the infantry, on May 11, 1945.

The atom bomb shortened the war and kept Orr out of combat. He played softball, baseball, and basketball for 15 months at Mare Island, California, and returned to Illinois briefly when his hitch was up.

In the meantime, his high school coach, Dolph Stanley, had become the coach at little Beloit College, just north of the border between Wisconsin and Illinois. Orr transferred there to join him.

"He was like a father to me," says Orr. "My mother died just as I went to Beloit and my dad had had a heart attack. Dolph was my coach from sixth grade through college, except for that one year.

"Beloit never gave me a nickel. I went there on the G.I. Bill, and it ran out about a month after I graduated. I lived in a G.I. hut with three other guys from Taylorville. I think seven of us from that team eventually came to Beloit. We didn't have anything, but it was better than we ever had before.

A brief fling with pro basketball, first with the St. Louis Bombers and then the Waterloo Hawks, followed. One year of that was enough. "Pro basketball didn't have the status like it does now. You weren't considered a first-class citizen. You weren't accepted. Besides, I was in Waterloo and my wife was back in St. Louis, so I decided to get a job and go into coaching."

He spent a year at Union High in Milton, Wisconsin, teaching four classes in social studies and social problems, assisting the baseball and football coaches and coaching the basketball team.

Then came eight years at Dubuque, Iowa. He was head basketball coach and a teacher of world history all that time, and spent three years as head football and golf coach.

John Erickson, a teammate at Beloit, got the basketball job at Wisconsin in 1959 and invited Orr to join him as an assistant. He was there for four years, doubling as line coach for the freshman football team.

"But I wanted to be a head coach," he recalls. "I was getting older (35). If I was gonna be a head coach, I figured I'd better get moving." He was hired at Massachusetts, "figuring I'd put in a couple of years there, then come back."

He did put in a couple of years in Amherst — three, actually — and he did come back, but not as he figured. "The job wasn't what I wanted to do in coaching, but everyone back here had forgotten who I was."

The time in Massachusetts wasn't exactly wasted ("I learned a lot out there. They changed defenses, used matchup zones, stuff I'd never heard of. They don't have the talent we have here but the coaches are sharp.") but, when an insurance company offered him employment anywhere he chose, he accepted the offer, packed his bags again, and moved to Champaign.

And that's where he was when Strack, in town with the Wolverines, called him up.

"He said he needed an assistant and did I know of anybody? He had Dick Honig and Pomey, but they were kids and he wanted someone his own age. I was going to a lot of high school games and hiring coaches to work for me, so I said I'd look around for him.

"He called me again at the end of the season and said he wanted a recommendation. I recommended myself."

Strack accepted Orr's recommendation just as, a year later, Canham accepted Strack's when he sought "Bee-Bee Eyes' " advice concerning his successor.

"I'm in favor of coaches coming up through adversity, through the ranks," says Orr. "I owe a lot to a lot of people. On the other hand, I've worked hard to make the jobs good jobs. Everybody thinks now that I've had this job all my life and it's been a great job all along. When I took it, the Michigan job was no prize."

One of the reasons it was no prize was that the Wolverines frequently looked better on paper than they did on hardwood, or Tartan surfaces, or whatever, and the fans reacted the way fans invariably do in such circumstances: most of them stayed away from the games, and many who did show up, booed.

That happened in the last two years of Strack's administration and it continued for the first five seasons under Orr. It wasn't until a bunch of relative unknowns, playing in a half-empty arena, started winning games with regularity on hustle, desire, and defense that the pattern was reversed. But that's getting ahead of our story.

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Covering Wolverine Basketball for the *News*

Jeff Mortimer has won a lot of fans with his candid and perceptive sports reporting. In this interview he shares his thoughts about his profession and this year's basketball team.

Jeff Mortimer, 33, has been a sports writer for the Ann Arbor News *for the past nine years. During the last six years he has been covering Wolverine basketball. We recently chatted with him about his background in journalism, his present perceptions of the Wolverine team, and his hopes for the future.*

Your newspaper account of a Michigan basketball game will almost always contain a solid analysis of why the game went the way it did. How do you go about it?

I think one of the things I've done for myself in the last year or two is try to become less emotionally involved with the team I cover. I think a certain amount of emotional involvement helps my writing, but beyond a certain point, I become too much of a fan and not enough of an observer. It's actually a little easier to be objective when the team isn't doing that well.

I feel with an evening paper especially, by the time people get the paper, they already know the score. What they want to know is why things happened the way they did. So that's my orientation throughout the game — to try to pay close attention to see what kind of defenses are being used, and what kind of substitutions are being made, and what the coaches are trying to accomplish. I ask questions afterward with that in mind, with the idea that I'm writing more of an analysis than a narrative. I try to write as if I were talking to one person who is interested in what's going on.

What do you think of this year's team?

I like this bunch. I think they get along together personally as well as any team I've ever been around, maybe better than the Michigan teams of the last couple of years. I think if they didn't, their record might be worse, because they are not as talented as last year or the year before. But in terms of likeability, they're a nice bunch of kids. There don't seem to be some of the divisions that seemed to be present in previous years.

Do you think, having lost their star center, Hubbard, that they are Big Ten contenders?

Before the season, I wrote down on the bottom of my schedule, 17-10, which was my prediction for the year. I would say right now in the Big Ten, they'll be 12-6 or 11-7, which is something like fourth place.

The road is tough. They've had three road games so far and lost twice, and I figure they could go something like 8-1 at home and probably 3-6 on the road. I figure they can beat Wisconsin and Northwestern on the road, but I don't know if there's anybody else they can beat on the road. I think that's true of other teams in the Big Ten as well. Once Michigan State goes on the road — they've got eight of their last twelve games on the road — they'll start losing, too.

One of the things that came across vividly from your book's portrayal of the star-studded 1970-71 Wolverines was how stars can hurt as well as help a team.

Recruiting is always a gamble. You don't know whether, if a guy's great in high school, he's going to be great in college. You don't know what kind of emotional adjustment he's going to have to make, you don't know whether the publicity is going to go to his head, you don't know if he has fatal weaknesses that high school teams aren't good enough to uncover.

Wisconsin was supposed to be great this year with their freshman, Larry Petty. I saw him the other night, and if he's a high school All-American, I'm King Kong. Ohio State has done pretty well, but Herb Williams, who's supposed to be a super prospect, hasn't really done the things they expected him to do.

So you don't know how a guy's going to respond, and you don't know if you've got four or five superstars whether they're going to be a *team*. Basketball is a team game. You know they have the saying: it isn't the team with the five best players, it's the team with the five players who play best together which wins. As often as not in my experience, the team with the best talent does not win.

Still, recruiting is an awfully important part of creating a winning basketball team, isn't it?

It would be very hard to underestimate it. I would say it's at least 75% of what it takes to make a successful team. You have to have the players, and if you don't recruit, you don't get the players.

After last season, you wrote a controversial column criticizing Ricky Green. What, again, did you write?

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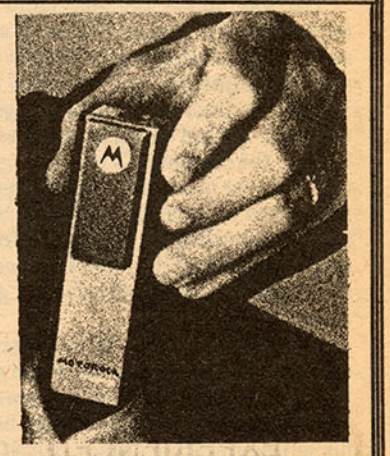

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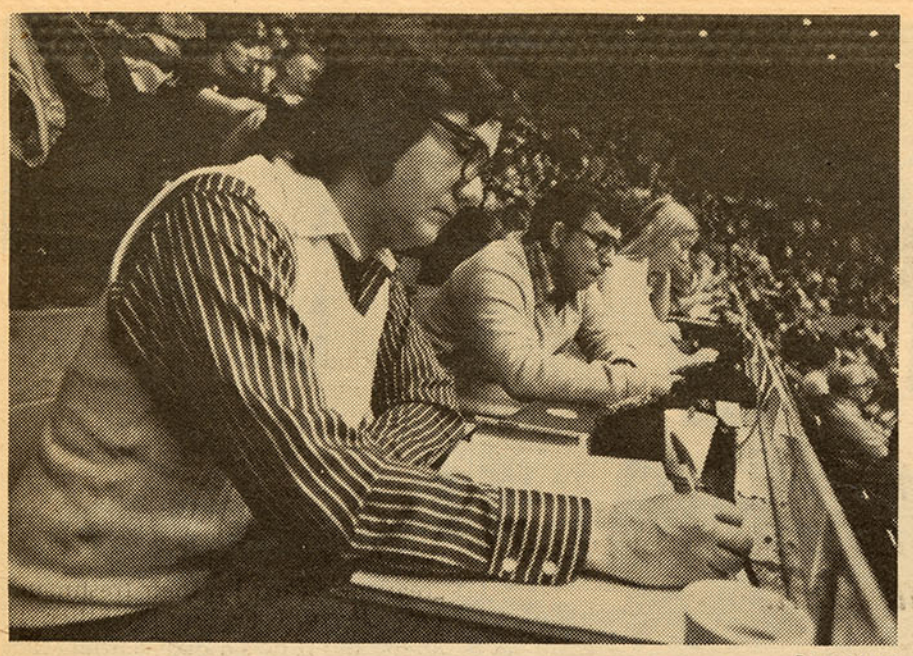

Peter Yates

What I said was that he was never completely integrated into the team — either as a player or as a person. And that as the season wore on, he became less interested in what his present team was doing and more interested in what his future team might be and how much money he might get from that team. [Green now plays for the Golden State Warriors.]

As most Wolverine basketball fans know, when John Orr read that column, he got so angry he issued a statement saying you would no longer be allowed to ride on the team charter. The gist of his outrage seemed to be that you were an ungrateful scoundrel for writing something like that after how nice the team had been to you. Have things been patched over between you and John?

Patched over is probably the way to put it. I have a hunch he's never completely going to forgive me. I like John and I respect his ability as a coach, and I think he respects my ability as a writer, but inevitably, coaches and writers will encounter situations where they're working at cross-purposes. And when that happens, I have my job to do and he has his to do.

I have yet to talk with anyone associated with the team who has said to me that what I wrote in the column is incorrect. What they have said is that I shouldn't have said it.

Do you again ride with the team charter?

I have not been asked to fly with the team, and I have not asked to fly with the team charter. The fact of the matter is that I only flew with the team a couple of times, and every time I did, the *News* paid for my fare, just as they would if I had flown commercial. But I don't want to give them any weapons. Ceaser's wife must be above suspicion, and if that means making my own connections and not flying on the team charter, then that's one of the things it means.

Has this made your job of covering the Wolverines more difficult?

No. There's really no way that the coaches or the players could keep me from doing my job. They could make it more difficult, but not impossible. Because they can't keep me from going to the games and from going into the locker room. And they can't keep me from the post-game press conferences.

I have never had a Michigan player refuse to talk with me. In fact John Orr is probably as liberal as any coach around in terms of letting reporters talk to his players. He used to encourage it. I haven't heard him encourage it this year, maybe because they're not doing as well. But some coaches — Indiana's Bobby Knight, for example– just close the locker room. John has never closed the locker room. He's always agreeable to having his players interviewed.

What has made John Orr such a successful basketball coach?

One of John's great gifts is that he knows his limitations. He knows what he can do and what he can't do, and he's not afraid to hire somebody who can do the things he does not do that well.

He's not that good at day-to-day administrative stuff. Like answering the mail and returning phone calls and keeping track of appointments. He needs a guy who is organized to do that.

He is not a good bench coach. Which doesn't mean that he isn't a good coach. Being a bench coach is only one part of being a good coach. Making adjustments during the game, knowing when to call time outs, making substitutions. He's not real strong at that.

He's a great practice coach. He knows what to work on, how much to work on it. Every part of practice is scheduled, every part has a purpose. His teams are always well prepared. But he really gets nervous

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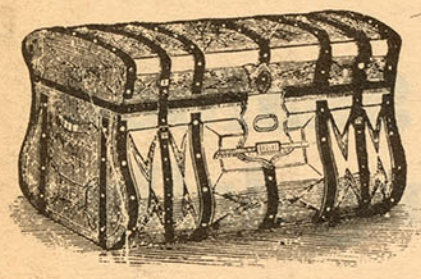

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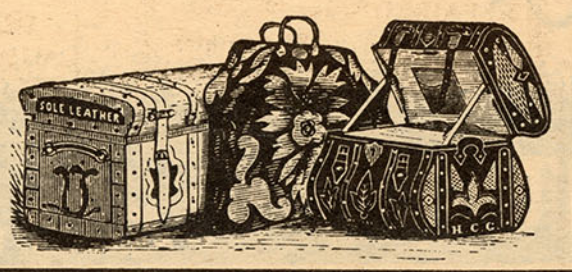

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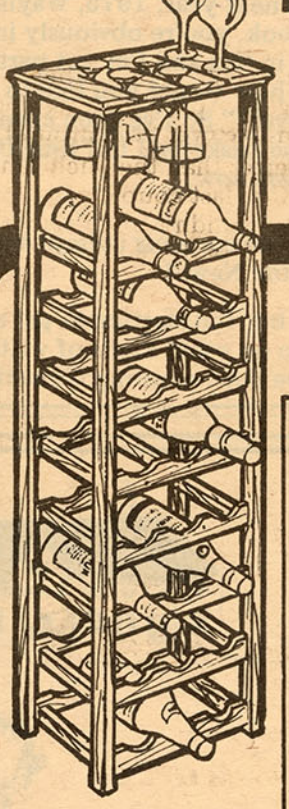

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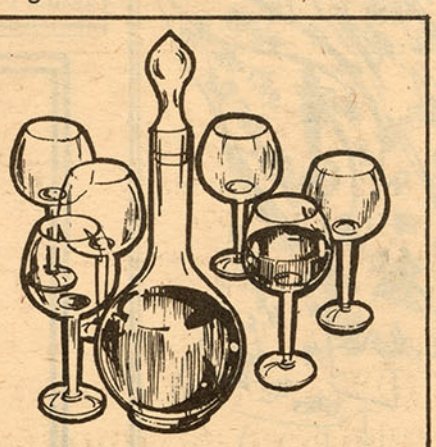

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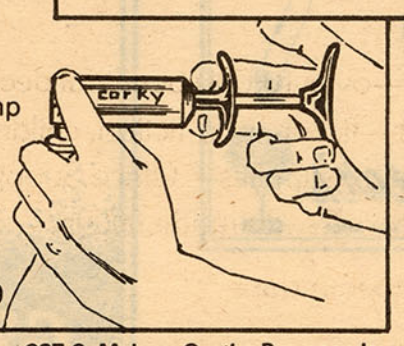


327 S. Main — On the Promenade

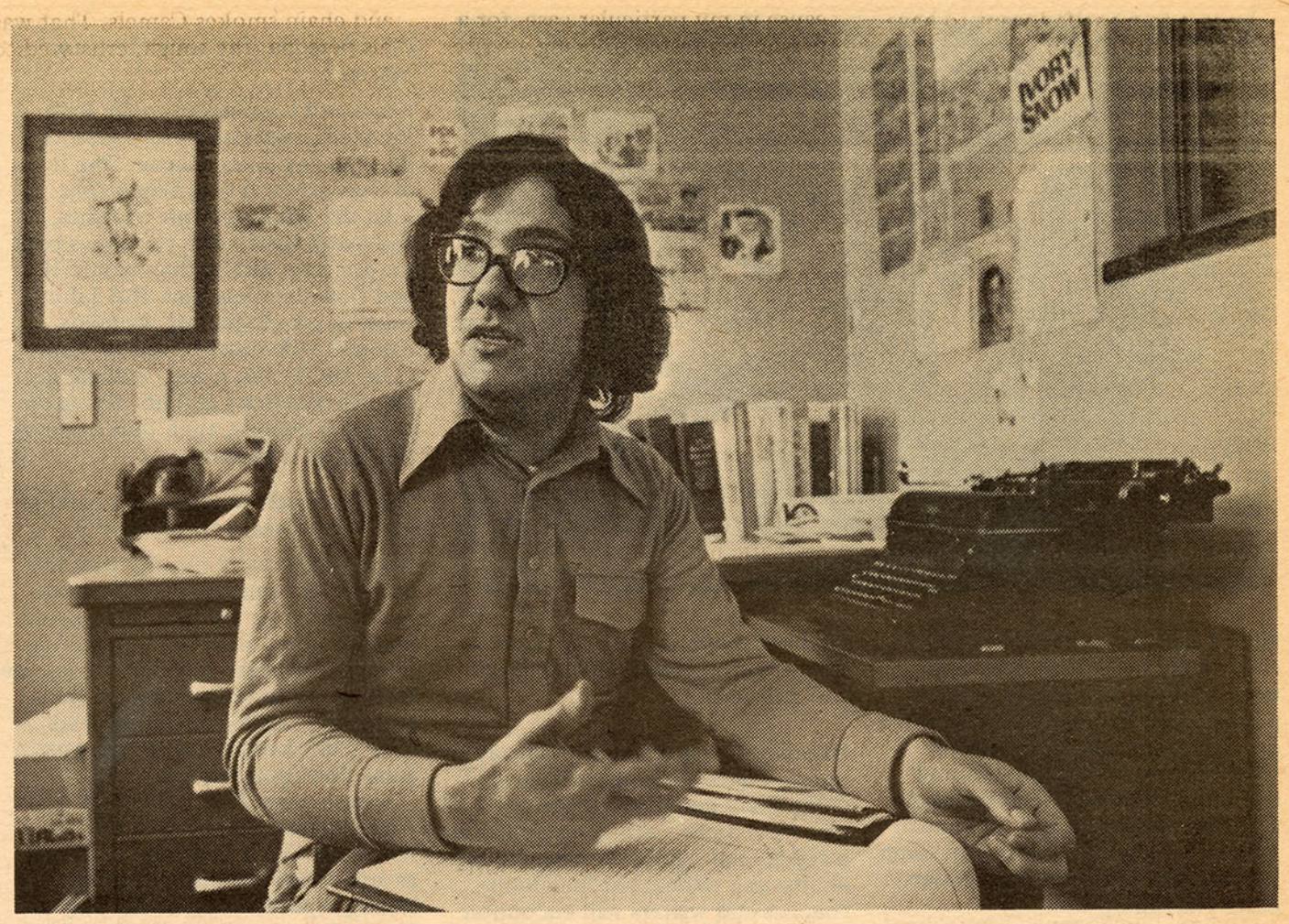
before games. And it takes him a long time to come down after a game. That nervousness may be why he's not an outstanding bench coach.

Do you particularly enjoy covering basketball?

The only sports I've ever really liked are baseball and basketball. I had imagined that as a sports writer I would simply cover what I like. And I found out, you know, that if you're a sports writer, you're an employee, and you cover what they tell you to cover.

So I spent years covering swimming and gymnastics and track and field and cross-country, all these things I didn't give a damn about. And there's no baseball coverage at Michigan except for six weeks during the spring. So almost to preserve my sanity, I started asking Wayne [DeNeff — the sports editor of the *News*] for passes to the U-M basketball games, which he was then covering. So I just attended the games for awhile. And then I said, "How would it be if I write a sidebar?" And Wayne said OK, so I did that for a while.

There was one year when I did sidebars on all the home games. And another year when I covered all the road games myself. And then there was a year when for some reason he didn't let me do much of anything. I only did a few basketball stories the whole year. And then the next year, 1975, Wayne said, "Look, you're obviously interested in this and I'm not particularly, so how would you like to take it over?" So I've been covering Wolverine basketball full time for three years now.



Peter Yates

Do you like covering college basketball for the News?

I like it, but I'm starting to get antsy I want to do other kinds of writing. Since I've been covering Wolverine basketball, it's been the first time in my career as a writer that I was actually writing about something I was genuinely interested in.

But is it getting stale, covering the Wolverines? Yeah. The travel gets pretty dreary sometimes. The amount of time you spend alone on the road. Also, I think I've reached a point in sports writing where all the games look pretty much alike after awhile. I feel like I'm writing stories I've written before. Like I'm not going anywhere, I'm not growing.

What would you like to move on to?

I would like to have a good enough reputation that I could write articles or books on a freelance basis. Get book contracts or get somebody from — not necessarily a sports magazine, although I wouldn't fight against writing sports — somebody who'd call me up and say, "Well, we'd like you to do a piece on thus and such, and you can have this much time to write it and this much money up front." Get into a situation in which I can earn my living writing without having, metaphorically speaking, to punch a clock. Or work for somebody else. I suppose a car salesman wants to have his own dealership some day, and the shoemaker wants to have his own little shop. That's the way

I put it to myself: I want to have my own little shop.

What topics would you like to cover as a freelance writer?

There are so many things I'm interested in — music, poetry, history. I'm interested in politics in much the same way I'm interested in sports — as a spectator activity. I like to write poetry. I have the sense that some of my poems may be pretty good, but I don't work on it enough.

I'm interested in people. This is something I tried to get into the book — I didn't want it to be a dreary recitation of statistics and scores, I wanted it to be about people. I'm a human being and I'm interested in what the other members of the species are up to. So almost anything that human beings do is interesting to me.

How did you begin your journalism career?

Actually, I started out as a stringer when I was thirteen years old. I was the guy who covered my high school in New Jersey for a weekly paper there called the *Ocean County Leader*. I covered football, track, baseball, and basketball. I did that kind of thing through high school, and then in college I worked part time during summers and during winter field periods for a couple of little papers in New Jersey, doing mostly things like city council meetings and zoning boards, and boards of education and whatnot.

Where did you go to college?

I went to Bard College in New York. It's an experimental liberal arts college. We had a saying: 'Bard has always been an experimental college, and we're not going to change it now.' It was first recommended to me by someone who had it confused with another college. But I wound up going there and being happy with the kind of college it was, because in my particular case, for a person interested in being a writer, the kind of education I got there was ideal. It was very much anti-specialization. They expect their alumni to be pretty well-rounded people, with a good general background, and of course that's what you need to be a journalist.

Were you planning to become a journalist while in college?

Actually my intention up until just before my senior year in college was to go through the whole academic routine and get my masters and my doctorate and be a professor of history someplace. But the summer before my senior year — I remember it as a very dramatic moment, like Saul on the road to Damascus — I was staying with my then wife's parents in Massachusetts, and I was driving to town one beautiful sunny New England summer afternoon, having just spent three hours looking at grad school catalogs. I suddenly said to myself, "I don't want to do this for four or six or eight more years. I want to get out and do something that's fun and live in the real world." At that point, sports writing was about all that I knew. So, instead of applying for graduate school, I started applying for sports writing jobs.

What was your first job after college?

I worked for two years at the *Poughkeepsie Journal* in Poughkeepsie, New York. I started out as a desk man. I was supposed to be in sports, but the guy who was supposed to leave didn't leave for about three or four months, so I wound up being at the city desk for that length of time, editing copy, writing headlines, writing captions for pictures. It was really good training.

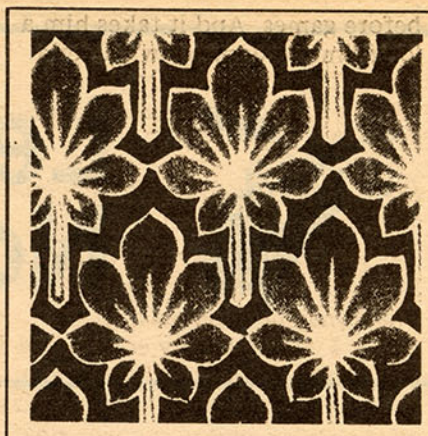
I happened to be taken under the wing of a crusty old guy who had every newspaper cliche except a green eyeshade — one of those guys with arm garters who's surly and chain smokes Camels. That was his persona: the tough, crusty editor like in the old 1940's movies. But he liked my work, and I was very pleased to please him, because I knew he was hard to please. I learned a lot from him about where the commas go and how long the paragraphs are supposed to be. And then when the sports writer finally left, I became the assistant sports writer of the *Journal* at the age of not quite 21.

At the time I thought of sports writing as something that would just be fun for a couple of years, but it's kind of gotten out of hand. Here it is eleven years later and I'm still doing it, which was never my intention. I don't know if that's inertia, or whether I just like it.

You were at the Journal *for two years. Where did you go from there?*

Then I got a job in Detroit (actually Highland Park) with the *Football News* and the *Basketball Weekly*, two papers published by the same creepy man, Roger Stanton. I lasted a little less than six months. I pretty much decided after about two weeks on that job that I wasn't going to stay there any longer than I had to, and then it was just a question of finding a job. I had just moved my family 800 miles and I didn't want to have to move them again. So I watched the ads in *Editor and Publisher*, sort of the trade magazine for newspapers, and finally the *Ann Arbor News* put an ad in and I got the job. That was in December of '69, and I've been here ever since.

The first few years here at the *News* were pretty dreary because I was doing the same things I was doing in Poughkeepsie. But once I started getting into the basketball coverage, it's been a lot of fun. For all the drawbacks of travel and so on, I'd still rather be doing that than anything else around here. •



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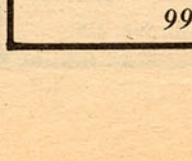

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Leisure Notes

Birds in Your Backyard

You can dramatically increase the number of birds which spend time in your backyard this winter. Simply broadcast five to ten cups full of mixed bird seed and cracked corn under and near your feeder each morning. Be sure to first tramp on any new snow or brush it aside with a push broom so that the food will not sink out of sight.

After a few days flocks of fifteen or twenty birds will forage simultaneously on this food and then perch in nearby shrubbery. Sometimes sixty to seventy-five birds will be on the ground at once. Sparrows, juncos, doves, jays, and starlings will be the most numerous.

Providing food in this manner allows birds to forage simultaneously because there is room for all to land and hunt at once. Thus, it increases the number of birds which you feed and reduces the squabbling which so often occurs between birds when they have to vie for access to the feeder. An additional advantage to this technique is that it allows you to control the amount of food the birds eat each day. You can put out as much or as little as you think circumstances require and your budget will allow. Squirrels will, or course, get their share too, but then they always do. •

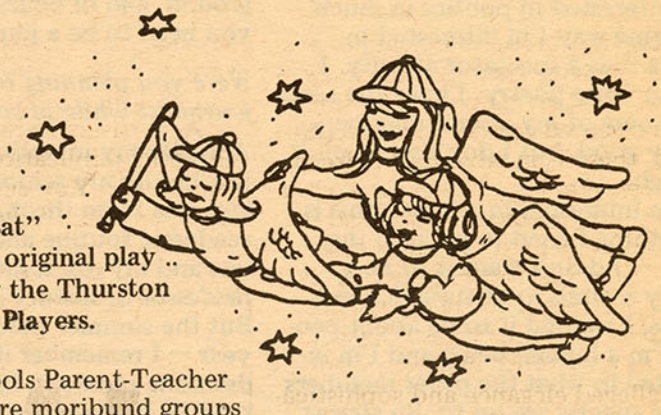
They Need Your Help

The Washtenaw County Department of Social Services Volunteer Program is looking for men and women who have two hours or more a week to spend helping others. Twelve volunteers are needed to serve as Friendly Visitors for elderly shut-ins and physically disabled adults. Ten volunteer Transporters are also needed who can spend two to six hours a week driving people to doctors' appointments and grocery shopping. Mileage reimbursement is available for all of these programs.

Another important Volunteer Services project is the Free Furniture Program. Furniture donations are matched with client's requests for help. Volunteers pick up donations free of charge and deliver them to clients. All types of useable furniture are in demand.

If you are interested in being a volunteer or if you have any furniture to donate please call 994—1839. Ask for Carrie Taube or Stephanie Kissel, Volunteer Services Coordinator. •

At Thurston School P.T.O., Homemade Drama's a Hit



"Angels at Bat" is this year's original play .. produced by the Thurston Community Players.

In some schools Parent-Teacher Organizations are moribund groups of people who seldom meet and don't know one another very well. That's not the case at Thurston Elementary School on Prairie between Plymouth and Nixon Roads, where the P.T.O.'s tradition of producing an original play is now in its fourth year. The play was conceived as a money-making project to buy extras for the school like playground equipment and audio-visual materials. "At first it was hard to get the men out," remembers Dee Allman, a four-year veteran and producer of this year's play. "But when they saw how much fun they were having, it just grew and grew. All of us who have hung with it want to go on to greater and greater things." For the many new families in the suburban subdivisions that make up the Thurston School district, working on the play is a good way to become acquainted with the neighbors.

Over a hundred people are involved in this year's show, an original musical called "Angels at Bat." The plot is of the situation comedy variety: at tiny Prairie State College, the president (played by Jack Chisholm, who also directs the show) takes a dim view of women athletes, preferring women to concentrate on more traditional feminine activities devoted to serving men. The college girls think differently and decide to start their own team, the Angels, led by Connie the star pitcher (Mary Lucas), who just happens to be the president's daughter. Aided by a benevolent fairy godfather (Gene Smith), the Angels have a successful season and find themselves facing the Pythons (Prairie State's men's baseball team) for the championship.

Parents and some teachers have been busy on the play since last summer. Pat Busch and Paul Tucker wrote the script. Jim Madsen took charge of building the rather elaborate sets. The ten-piece orchestra is composed of Thurston alumni now in middle school and high school.

"Angels at Bat" will be performed at the Clague Middle School Auditorium, 2616 Nixon Road, at 8 PM on February 23, 24, and 25. Tickets ($1 for children through 12, $2 for adults, and $5 for patrons, who are entitled to sit in the first six rows) can be purchased at the door. Last year's shows sold out, but advance orders can be made by phoning 995-2055 or 663-2814. •

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The New *Impresario*: A Magazine for the Affluent

Regional cultural magazines are a fast-growing field in publishing. Targeted at an affluent, consumption-oriented market in a specific area, they're an advertiser's dream. Yet ten years ago *The New Yorker* was almost all there was — and it was actually national, of course. Few cities had local magazines at all, and most of those were little more than a collection of awkwardly boosterish articles praising the alleged elegance and sophistication of local restaurants and cultural events, sandwiched between prestige ads for mink coats, jewelry, and luxury cars.

Today, following in the footsteps of the *New York Magazine* formula, Chicago, Cleveland, Dallas, Atlanta and a host of other cities and states have regional magazines of considerable journalistic sophistication.

The Detroit market area (which includes southeastern Michigan and northwestern Ohio) has been the nation's largest metropolitan area without such a magazine — a fact that did not escape the notice of the successful Ann Arbor advertising agency of Buckheim and Rowland. As agency founder Dick Buckheim explains, "We have clients who want to reach the major decision-makers in the auto and glass industries, and we wanted a tool to reach those markets." To reach these high-income markets, advertisers have had to use an expensive variety of media from WJR to local newspapers and regional editions of national magazines.

Buckheim and Rowland eyed with interest *Impresario*, a Michigan magazine of travel and cultural events established in 1961 and owned mostly recently by Pat and John Danovitch.

Last year Buckheim and Rowland purchased *Impresario* and totally redesigned it, attempting to fill the perceived need for a single medium to reach its affluent target market. They tell prospective advertisers, "We believe *Impresario* offers you a well-defined audience at a price that makes sense." That price, for a circulation of 25,000 copies, is $1,200 a page for a full page ad.

Impresario's editorial mix consists of articles on food and restaurants, travel, painting, music and related arts, plus a three-month calendar of events. The first issue of the quarterly magazine appeared December 1. It's a handsome publication on slick coated paper, with high-quality four-color photography and informative writing that lacks any trace of boosterish provincialism. It includes an interview with Jamie Wyeth; a comparison of Frank Lloyd Wright and Leopold Stokowski; a travel piece on Bayfield, Ontario; an art review; plus three food articles by Ann Arbor writers: an appreciation of Chateau Mouton-Rothschild wine by wine authority Dan Longone; Annette Churchill Hodesh writing on southeast Michigan country sausage makers; and Cathy Arcure's review of Benno's, a restaurant in Indian Village, Detroit.

Advertisers were plentiful for a fledgling publication: the Campus Inn, Wright Kay Jewelers, Ford Thunderbird, Dodge Diplomat, WJR Radio, GMC Motor Homes, Time-Life Records, the Ann Arbor Conference and Visitors' Bureau, Detroit Bank and Trust, and Libby-Owens-Ford had full-page ads or more.

The editorial content of *Impresario* reflects the interests of its top staff. Publisher Dick Buckheim is a painter both by training and in practice, Editor-in-Chief Dick Rowland is knowledgeable about music, and Managing Editor Jim Conlan is involved in music and the fine arts.

Unless your annual income is in the $25,000-and-over bracket, you probably haven't seen the new *Impresario*. The publishers believe their energies are best placed in direct mail distribution, not complicated newsstand sales, so they're mailing the first four issues free to nearly every household in Detroit, Flint, Lansing, Ann Arbor and Toledo with a $25,000-or-over annual income, as identified by the R. R. Polk Company's target mailing list compiled from census data, car registrations, and other public sources. 25,000 households will receive the December issue, 25,000 different households will receive March, and so on for four issues. •

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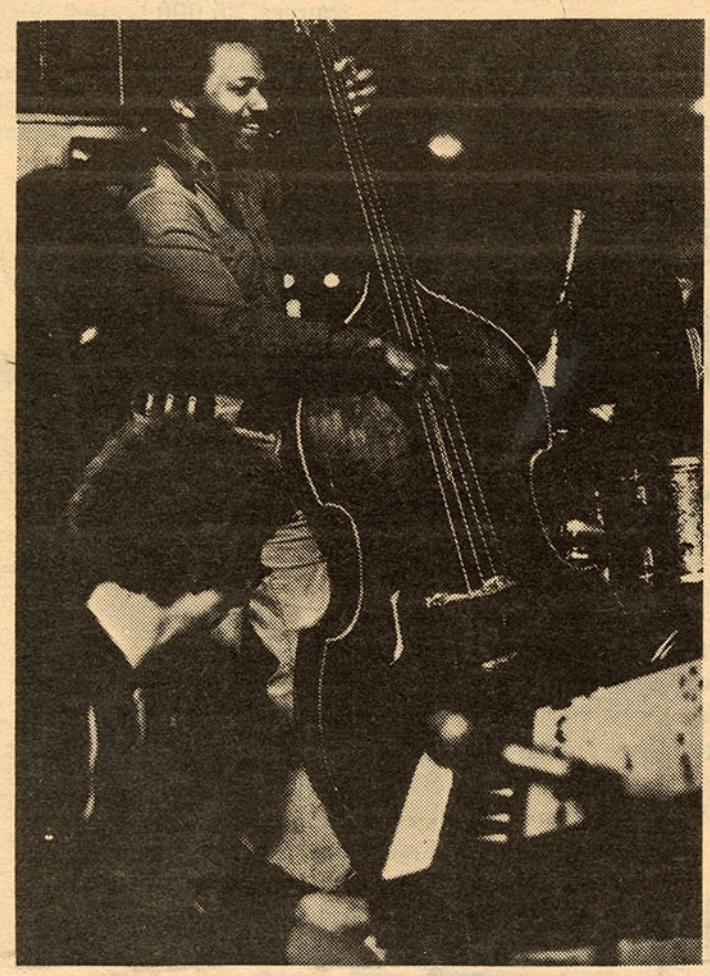

Peter Yates

Mixed Bag's Ron Brooks on bass, Kevin O'Connell on piano.

Ron Brooks' Mixed Bag plays an eclectic form of mainstream jazz. They can be heard regularly five nights a week, beginning around 9, at the Ann Arbor Inn, Fourth and Huron. Wednesday through Saturday evenings the Mixed Bag trio (Ron Brooks, bass; Danny Spencer, drums; Kevin O'Connell, piano) plays downstairs in the Pub. Sundays they're joined by Dave Kothur, percussion, and Bruce Dunlap, guitar, in the rooftop Sandalwood Lounge. Brooks and Spencer have been part of the Ann Arbor jazz scene since it flourished briefly in the early sixties, before the ascendency of rock.

David Kozubei, poet, bookseller, and recent jazz fan, gives us his impression of the Mixed Bag's music and finds out about the musicians as well.

In the candlelit downstairs bar of the Ann Arbor Inn, Ron Brooks introduces a Miles Davis piece. As the trio begins, it plays fast and clear. The players listen with ears and bodies to each other's constructions in music. When the energy starts, it races at high speeds. The music drives like incessant sea waves in a sea.

In the audience, some listen, absorbed. Others talk.

After Miles, they play an original by Kevin O'Connell, on the piano. The bass says, "It's a slow day. The waves of the sea are lazy." The drums, next, are sharper. The piano then is lyrical. First one instrument, then another, becomes more noticeable. Then all three in turn become more impassioned, making longer strides, not little spurts. The bass says, "Listen to me! What I say is important." The piano replies, "Yes, yes." And the percussion says, "I'm with you too, I'm listening," and elaborates on the bass's theme from his own experience. Then the piano says, "Yes, that's how it was for me—that's exactly how it happened." They all agree. Then they walk on, each making some comment of his own. The bass begins to insist, and the piece ends.

The intense concentration and personal expression of jazz are very rewarding for the people who play it. Ron Brooks, leader of Mixed Bag, calls the music "therapeutic." "There's a warm feeling about it. Even when I'm playing alone, I have more of a focus on right now- on 'What's that sound? What's that feeling?"

The concentrated but small-scale intensity of non-amplified jazz may have lost out to the heavy sound of rock in the last decade, but Ron feels it's coming back. "People are asking for it now—the intimate and personal touch of live jazz and its challenge to audiences."

Ron was an undergraduate at E.M.U. in the early Sixties, when someone heard him play bass and made him an offer. He needed extra money, so he played at weekend jam sessions with experienced musicians and learned from them. Soon the legalized sale of liquor by the glass created a market for jazz performed on a regular basis. " 'Til then," Ron remembers, "no hard liquor was sold in Ann Arbor bars, only stores. Those bars that couldn't get hard liquor right away had to compete some other way. Rick Burgess, Bob James (he's had a gigantic national career), and myself, all college students, started jazz at some bars. I suggested it to the Falcon [predecessor to the Golden Falcon]. Before that, there was only jazz in fraternities, sororities, and occasional U. concerts. We played at the Town Bar [today's Cracked Crab] around 1965 and '66.

"Then in the late sixties, jazz, more intellectual, lost out to dancing. Rock rose, and the intimacy of jazz was lost. Potential jazz players did rock because of the economics. But jazz started back again in the Seventies with crossover music (fast rock with bebop in it). You could hear it at the Golden Falcon, Mackinac Jack's, and The Blind Pig. I booked the Del Rio for Sunday afternoon groups.

"Then fusion music (a blend of rock and fast Latin jazz) got younger musicians listening to Miles [Davis] and [John] Coltrane. I started playing more. I was in New York two years—but the lifestyle was too difficult. I toured Europe one year. We made two records, did concerts . . . but the economics stopped that. So I finally finished my Ph.D. in psychology."

Today Ron works in the U-M Office of Continuing Education for the Education Professions, conducting workshops and counseling. Danny Spencer, who has played drums and percussion with Ron off and on for over a decade, has actually made a living playing jazz for the past two or three years—a fortunate possibility, after the recent hard times for jazz musicians "Five years ago," Danny said, "there was only Chick Corea left in jazz. Jam sessions in clubs had faded. Being professional, I had to learn to play rock and roll. I hated it. That's why I got back into jazz on a bare survival level."

Ron and Danny, at 37 and 35, are veterans. Kevin O'Connell, the pianist and other member of the Mixed Bag Trio, is a 20-year-old architecture student who jazz through fusion only four years ago. He's a genuine eclectic who would like to be "a total musician," he says. "I'd like to play almost every type of music, incorporate any musical idea, phrase, rhythmic pattern or chord improvisation." He likes jazz because each musician can express his own ideas in it. •

—David Kozubei

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